

Faith in Brooklyn

The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

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SPECIAL ISSUE

WE CAN ALL GET ALONG

Faithful flourish in Kensington's melting pot

By Mat Probasco
for The Brooklyn Paper

From Gothic cathedral spires and towering synagogues to tiny storefront mosques, it's hard to get around Kensington without bumping into some manifestation of holiness.

Faith lurks on nearly every corner.

And more often than not, the invisible addresses its faithful along cultural lines in this famously diverse area.

Howling Hispanics called out for Jesus behind the dirty glass windows of a cramped little Pentecostal church on Newkirk Avenue every Sunday. Inside, a tiny toddler boy put a tambourine on his head and a crown-of-thorns-style.

A sleek, young cluster of children stood on the steps of

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THE CROSSROADS OF FAITH: Khalifa Hassan, a native of Pakistan, worships at the Al-Mahdi Foundation mosque (far left) on Coney Island Avenue, just blocks away from the International Baptist Church (center), where pastor John Morgan leads the congregation, also just blocks away from the Iglesia Pentecostal on Church Avenue (far right).



Levana Kirschenbaum leads a kosher cooking class in Prospect Heights last week.

Matzo meal

The best holiday food is the kind that takes you home

By Jordana Rothman
for The Brooklyn Paper

My mother once said, "Passover food is all about not trying too hard." Her caveat wasn't about effort, though. It was about bravado. It was the response she offered when I suggested subbing braised mutton for the brisket classic. French quenelles for gefilte fish or those little fillets of mahi mahi with matzo meal and crushed sage. It was her way of suggesting that Passover is about honoring tradition, not about reinventing it.

"Not trying too hard" leaves room for the gelatinous texture and briny sting of gefilte fish, the robust nuances of braised meat and

the dimension of a kugel as its crisp upper crust falls away to reveal its savory, meaty interior. There's a time and place for experimentation, but for many, the Passover table, where the whole family sits down together, is a thumbtiful of Matzaviehr, a place to return to for the familiar flavors of their youth.

At my house, rolled into each matzo ball and seared into each brisket is a meaningful family history. My mom grew up on the Lower East Side and traveled from Queens and Brooklyn to New Jersey and Boca Raton. The recipes are ancient and thick with history; the aromas curling forth from the oven are unchanged, the flavors as evocative and nostalgic as any family album.

See MATZO on page 10

Faith in Brooklyn

SPECIAL ISSUE

Welcome to our second annual "Faith in Brooklyn" special issue, published in time for Easter and Passover. But this week's paper isn't just a Judeo-Christian celebration. As in last year's collector's edition, we're exploring faith in the broadest sense of the word. Inside, stories look at the borough's "faithiest" neighborhood (Kensington, above), Passover cooking (at left), the ancient Chinese art of tai chi (see page 6), how to welcome gays and lesbians are welcome (see page 7), and a rabbi who is good at math (see page 8). Of course, no one's shocking lack of religious literacy (see page 9). Even Smartman gets into the act, with a review of a "Passover Haggadah for Buddhists and Jews" (see page 13). Enjoy — and have faith.



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State: We never saw Yards number\$

By Ariella Cohen
for The Brooklyn Paper

State officials admitted this week that when they approved Atlantic Yards last year they were relying on documents that were incomplete — and may have even been in violation of Bruce Ratner's original deal with the state.

The documents contained Ratner's cash-flow projections and other information required under the original Atlantic Yards Memorandum of Understanding, but lacked other key financial details of the proposed arena: 6,000 housing units and hundreds of thousands of square feet of commercial development.

The information in the documents had been provided by Ratner to the accounting giant KPMG, which in turn assumed responsibility for the accuracy of the information. The company, whose work was paid for by Ratner, said it verified the Ratner-provided data "to the extent possible."

Ratner's failure to provide a comprehensive financial plan was a condition of the MOU, which was signed by the developer, Mayor Bloomberg and Gov. Pataski. That document mandated a public review of a "financing and operating plan" in exchange for public support and \$200 million from the city and the state (since raised to \$305 million).

The missing business plan was first reported by the New York Sun this week.

The disclosure that the ESDC approved Atlantic Yards without seeing Ratner's full

Ratner set to demolish his 'Ward'

By Ariella Cohen
for The Brooklyn Paper

Ratner is about to tear down the most historic building in the footprint of Atlantic Yards, but he's doing it green!

The developer began preparing the site for demolition of the Pacific St. for an eco-friendly demolition last week, several months after activists lost a three-year fight to preserve the ornate, 95-year-old building as a city landmark.

The building — whose destruction "would constitute a significant adverse [historic] impact" according to even Ratner's boosters at the Empire State Development Corporation — will not be saved, but it will live on in a very different form: Three-quarters of the rubble will be recycled.

"We are seeking out every possible way to make Atlantic Yards as eco-friendly and environmentally sensible as possible," Ratner said in a statement.

But Ratner's green thumb is not just a matter of environmental stewardship, but also his bottom line. In New York State, builders who meet certain criteria for energy and waste efficiency can claim up to \$7,500

per square foot against their state tax bill, saving them hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Ratner's opponents slammed the developer for destroying the building — which was once

called a "snow-white temple of bread-making cleanliness," but more recently was seen as the

great white hope of those who sought to bring back Atlantic Yards.

Built in 1911, it is recognizable by its ornate moldings and terra cotta facade, a salience that, if polished, would shine.

"It was an integral part of the Prospect Heights landscape that we didn't think would be crushed," said Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn spokesman Daniel Goldstein, who was part of the fight to save the structure.

But the ESDC said that it was "not practicable" to reuse it, and Ratner has said he can't build his \$4-billion Atlantic Yards with the Ward still standing.

The bakery demolition is only

a small part of this phase of Atlantic Yards.

In a rush to complete his Frank Gehry-designed basketball arena in time for the 2009 season, Ratner has already demolished 15 buildings on Pacific Street, between Fifth and Sixth avenues, on Dean Street and on Flatbush, Atlantic and Vanderbilt avenues.

In a letter sent to local community boards last week, a Ratner spokesperson said that the demolition would take six months to complete.

business plan comes after months of pressure from opponents and Brooklyn public officials who criticized the state for failing to release the full financial review of the largest development in the borough's history.

Assemblyman Jim Brennan (D-Park Slope) and state Sen. Velmanette Montgomery (D-Park Slope) sued the ESDC to get the review. Now it turns out that the state needed it to provide — and local politicians are furious.

"The state should have known everything there is to know about the project and disclosed it at the start," said Stan Rockwell, a spokesman for Councilman David Vassky (D-Brooklyn Heights).

"The fact that they didn't even have the first step completed doesn't reflect well."

ESDC spokesman Eric Corbin declined to comment on the state's own MOU. The previous administration "felt comfortable" relying on the KPMG report, he said. "[The financial documents] met the test for the previous administration to fast-track [the project] to the state for approval," he said.

The KPMG report projects that Ratner

will walk away with a \$400-million profit from his state-backed \$4-billion Prospect Heights stadium.

Brennan said he had sued to see the financial documents because they are important to backing up — or spelling out — Ratner's claim that the project needs to be so big in order to attract investors to build the basketball arena and 2,250 units of below-market-rate housing.

"This information is absolutely relevant

to anyone seeking to amend this project at all," Brennan said.

Forest City Ratner did not respond to questions from The Brooklyn Paper.

THE STOOP
WILL RETURN NEXT WEEK



The former Wards Bakery, eligible for a spot on the National Registry of Historic Places, will be demolished by owner Bruce Ratner starting this week.

Marco Polo RISTORANTE *Celebrate Easter*

SUNDAY, APRIL 8TH

APPETIZER

Insalata Organica • Mozzarella Fresca • Cocktail di Gambieri (additional \$4.95)
Grilled Vegetable Napoleon • Traditional Hot Antipasto

Porobello sauté with Polenta

ZUPP & PASTA

Minestrone • Lobster Bisque

Penne with fresh tomato & basil

Angel hair with shrimp and asparagus in pink sauce

Risotto with an array of seafood & diced tomatoes

Baked homemade pasta with mushrooms, meatballs, basil & tomato sauce

ENTREE

Spring baby lamb, seasoned with rosemary served with red bliss potatoes
Salmon topped with breadcrumbs & herbs

Tilapia fish sautéed with capers & lemon

Chicken breast sautéed & topped with asparagus, mozzarella & tomato
Veal scaloppini topped with prosciutto, mozzarella, eggplant & tomato in a brown sauce

Grilled sirloin steak (additional \$5.95)

Coffee ** Pastiera ** Assorted Desserts

Espresso - additional \$1, Cappuccino - additional \$1.50

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Marco Polo

GIVE 'EM THAT OL' GAY RELIGION

Religious institutions reach out to gays

By Joe Pompeo
for The Brooklyn Paper

Carol Scott stood before her congregation one recent Sunday and announced she had rescinded her membership in the National Methodist Church due to its discriminatory stance on homosexuality. It was a life-altering moment for the 41-year-old Prospect Heights resident.

"It was an incredibly hard decision that took many months of prayer, mediation and grieving," she said that afternoon in the basement of Park Slope United Methodist Church.

"It was a deepening, clarifying step in my faith journey. I'm not stepping away from my faith; I'm stepping more into it."

Dorothee Benz, 44, Scott's partner of three years added: "Many of us wrestle with this every day and it's an almost constant questioning. But if you're interested in a spiritual journey, you have to stay within the church that gets it right."

Scott and Benz are among the many religious members of Brooklyn's gay and lesbian community. Bound earlier by traditional ties, the need for spiritual ties to religious institutions that deem their sexuality immoral, many struggle to divorce faith from church policy. But when they find a place in which the need for personal expression in their denominations or choose to worship only as part of a local congregation, gay people here seem increasingly comfortable practicing their faith in accordance with it.

Take Linda Perry, a former Catholic who joined Park Slope Methodist in 2003.

Perry left the Catholic Church more than two decades ago due to what she called "conflicts of prejudice and exclusion."

She remained a woman without a church for the next 18 years, but when she moved to Park Slope, she decided that joining a church would be a



Dorothee Benz (right) and Carol Scott at the Park Slope United Methodist Church on Sixth Avenue and Eighth Street, which welcomes lesbians and gays.

Don't know much about theology

By Christie Rizk
The Brooklyn Paper

Nearly 90 percent of Americans say they believe in God — now, quick, can you name the Four Gospels?

If you can't, you're not alone. Despite our nation's incredibly strong faith, most Americans don't know their Askin from their Ezekiel.

"The state of the Union is abysmal," Stephen Prothero, chair of Boston University's religion department and author of a new book, "Religious Literacy" — that urges greater tolerance of religious schools.

Whoa, but not to violate our nation's traditional barrier between Church and State, Prothero's religion is knowledge.

"Keeping religion is conducive to a good Democracy," said Prothero.

He saw it play out every day on the killing fields of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The inability of the people leading the war on terror to figure out the basics of Islam — Shitites? Sunnis? Who knows? — only exacerbates the problem.

"We're surprised that all of a sudden, the Sunnis and Shitites are fighting, but that's the kind of thing you would learn in high school," Prothero said.

To demonstrate how little Americans know about the basics of religion, Prothero gives students a religion quiz.

The 15-question test covers everything from the 10 Commandments (can anyone really name them all?) to what the First Amendment means.

To test Brooklyn's religious literacy, a Brooklyn Paper reporter hit the streets with the 10 easiest questions on Prothero's quiz (see graphic). Most respondents considered themselves believers — and most of them failed the test anyway.

Sure, some were accidentally right.

When one woman was asked to name a sacred Hindu text, she laughing said, "The Kama Sutra," without realizing she was correct. Her husband leaned over and said, "Isn't that a sex manual?" (It is. Now, that's a corollary.)

Average, people got about six of the 10 Commandments and absolutely no one knew the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism.

The results may seem odd, considering the Bible's omnipresence in society. That's why Prothero believes that education is necessary — not just for personal understanding, but also on a national and international level.

But some Brooklynites warned that a school religion class could become an excuse to preach. "I don't want some teacher to teach my kids that evolution isn't true and make them pray in school," said one First Amendment expert. "Who didn't wish to be identified?"

She conceded, however, "If teaching them religions — as long as it's not an excuse to make them pray in school — makes them aware of the world, then I think it's OK."

Her squeamishness is commendable, but the problem is education, food training and a little common-mindedness, said Prothero.

"There's no constitutional barrier to teaching religion," he said, "simply the problem is the teaching of religion — bad vs. the teaching about religion — good."

"There are going to be uncomfortable feelings, but that already happens anyway with Intelligent Design classes," Prothero said.

Or we could all just watch "Pulp Fiction" and read "The Da Vinci Code."



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At Park Slope Methodist, she felt like she "had come home," she said.

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Single white believer seeks the same



By Liz Cooper
for The Brooklyn Paper

Surfing ChristianMingle.com, it seems the prerequisite is to already be in a committed relationship — with the Lord.

"I'm looking for a God-fearing woman, a woman who loves the Lord...," begins a man's profile. On the next page, a woman in mid-giggle from her photo exclaims: "I am a Christian woman who is passionately in love with the Lord."

Could this be a match made in heaven?

For singles of all faiths, salvation (or at least love) can be found online. And while sites that narrow in on all religions and beliefs, Jill, 28 and Matthew, 27 of Marine Park, had briefly met through mutual friends, but it took crossing

paths on JDate, the go-to online dating site for Jewish singles, to result in many dates' ultimate goal — marriage. And Faye, a 24-year-old Muslim, met her husband on Match.com.

"Arranged marriage is no longer accepted in most Arab families. Instead, a method of courting has taken over," she explains. "You have to wait until you're of marrying age after a number of social gatherings. This puts those of us who are busy with educational and work-related things in a bind, somewhat of a bind. For a lot of young Muslim professionals, the Internet is a great way to meet someone of a similar background."

But for many in the real dating world, and not the virtual playground, the singles' scene for faith-minded folks can be less than divine. Mohammed

Faith in Brooklyn

— a Brooklyn Muslim who, like many others in his religion, doesn't believe in conventional dating, but wants to court a wife through friends and acquaintances — says at age 25 he's still a virgin.

"I've waited this long out of fear. It's my new territory — your whole life changes when you make that choice," he explains. "People who are usually put themselves there, they don't have just the small talk to worry about, but also in some cases, that pink elephant in the room — their faith."

Lisa, 33, a New York transplant, who converted from Judaism to Christianity as a pre-teen, describes one date she had with someone who was half-minded.

He brought up astrology, and when she asked him if he believed in it, his response was, "Well, I'd say it's true, but I'm a good standing on a rock telling me God wants you to do these 10 things and you're damned if you don't, but don't worry, he loves you anyway."

The pretzel match ended that date, like so many others before it: "Basically New York City is a culture where 'Christian bashing' is encouraged and I have encountered it at many times."

For Lisa, going out with fellow Christians has provided beneficial aspects to the usual

dating woes. "There is something comforting about dating a Christian and knowing they won't push [sex]... It's the same feeling as bowing your head in prayer before dinner and knowing the other person isn't looking around to see who is watching."

Cindy Galdal, director of the Tri-State Oasis Singles Ministry, which offers various annual events designed to take the pressure off finding someone. She founded the group in 1998 after she realized she was tired of attending singles events where she would end up feeling "more lonely" afterward.

"So many singles... in their free time, they're at their church or synagogue, and the Chabad events allow people to branch out and make deeper connections," explains Cindy. "We want them to connect with

Christ, live a life of service. Not get wrapped up in being single."

And for some of those mismatched, like Tom, 37, who comes from a traditional Catholic family, his preference is to let fate take its course. He says he mostly meets women by accident, on the subway, parties, through friends, rather than seek through church or singles groups. He feels that sometimes the "regular" and "most honest" comes a counterpart."

And although he prefers to date women who have a similar value system as he does, he admits he's not as strict as he used to be about finding someone who is specifically Catholic: "I allowed religion to erase some people from my life, but I regret that. What I learned is that relationships on a personal level are about how you can relate, get along and respect the differences."

Hooking up — online

Here are some of the most popular online religious dating sites (with their mottos).

- www.ChristianMingle.com ("Christian web site for Christian singles.")
- www.JDate.com ("Explore the possibilities.")
- www.LetterDayLove.com ("Helping Latter Day Saints find love.")
- www.DharmaMatch.com ("Where spiritual singles meet.")
- www.ChristianCafe.com ("Connecting Arabs worldwide.")

— Cooper

God to Ratner: Don't build so big

If THERE ARE ANY ATHEIST opponents of Atlantic Yards, they might want to start believing in God — because God, apparently, is opposed to Bruce Ratner's mega-development.

Now, of course, I'm simplifying one of the great theocratic questions of our day: Is God a fan of a specific Old Testament-style wimp? for his disloyal servant, Bruce Ratner?

Simplification or not, an increasing number of men of the cloth believe He is.

The debate over the godlessness of Ratner's 16-tower arena, office and residential development began earlier this year when a Long Island priest, the Rev. Fred Jenkins of St. Luke's parish in the Bronx, announced that he opposed Atlantic Yards on religious grounds.

God, he said, does not support the use of eminent domain — which is necessary if Ratner is to realize his vision.

The moral crusade against the mega-development was later joined by the Rev. Daniel Meeter of the Old

**THE BROOKLYN
ANGLE** By Gersh Kuntzman
THE SCRIPTURE

First Reformed Church in Park Slope. On his blog (yes, even pastors have blogs these days), Meeter called Atlantic Yards a "moral issue" because of its sheer size.

"The Bible is not against development," Meeter wrote. "But the scale of a project can affect its relative morality. The scale of this project is monstrous, and that is a moral issue."

Another "moral issue"? His belief that government agencies were "prejudiced" in favor of Ratner.

"In this case, [government] is playing for the wrong teams," Meeter wrote. "That itself is a moral issue."

And, like so many things Biblical, there lies a tale of Naboth and his vineyard. Now, this wasn't an

Ernest and Julio Gallo-sized factory farm, but a small vineyard that just happened to sit on land that King Ahab wanted. But alas, the Torah forbade the king from seizing the land.

But Ahab's wife, Queen Jezebel (she was a goner, but that's a whole other story, right?) got the town fathers into believing that Naboth had spoken against God and the king. For that, Naboth was sentenced to death, paving the way for Ahab to take the land.

"I don't know what Atlantic Yards [architect] Frank Gehry wants," Meeter wrote. "I don't know what Bruce Ratner wants or what [Borough President] Michael Bloomberg wants. I don't think they want to be like gods. But apparently they don't know when to say, 'No, Enough.'"

On the other hand, plenty of Brooklynites are saying they don't know when to say, "Enough."

Given the fact that Naboth (Brooklyn) had a vineyard (private homes) that he didn't want to give up, so the town fathers (the Empire State Development Corporation) took it away from him and gave it to Ahab (Ratner).

But is it illustrative? After all, Ahab (Ratner) got his land and lived happily ever after, right? The Biblical story ends with God's judgment: "What was bad happened to Naboth (Brooklyn) that Ahab (Ratner) was later killed in a freak accident (freak accident?).

Meeter said he wasn't surprised.

"In the Torah, small owners of private property are seen as where prosperity lies... that was, Atlantic Yards breaks the rules of the Torah."

Meeter also cited the stories of the Tower of Babel (God was against it) and Adam and Eve as Biblical examples of leaders not knowing what to say when it came to God.

"I don't know what Atlantic Yards architect," Frank Gehry wants."

Meeter wrote, "I don't know what Bruce Ratner wants or what [Borough President] Michael Bloomberg wants."

Given the fact that Naboth (Brooklyn)

(it's a pretty compelling story, Naboth (Brooklyn) had a vineyard (private homes) that he didn't want to give up, so the town fathers (the Empire State Development Corporation) took it away from him and gave it to Ahab (Ratner)).

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The great thereafter?

What is heaven? What is hell? We hit the streets to find out.

— Ariella Cohen

Respondent **Heaven / Hell**

Respondent	Heaven / Hell
Chris Havens, Boerum Hill, real estate broker	That reminds me of a joke: A real-estate broker shows up in heaven and it's a closing. He says, "Wait, I wonder what hell is." It turns out, hell is a closing, too. He asks about it, and Satan says, "In heaven, the sale actually closes."
Ron Schweiger, Flatlands, Brooklyn Borough Historian	Heaven is a vacation in a beautiful paradise, or a cooperative classroom. Hell is when a teacher has a class that won't be quiet.
Susan Liddell, DUMBO, bike mechanic	Heaven is someplace where people are able to get along with no drama. Hell is a day filled with working on French bicycles.
Ken Siegelman, Bensonhurst, poet laureate of Brooklyn	Heaven is what you make of it in this life and the coming life. Hell is living with illness.
Greg O'Connell, Cobble Hill, developer	Heaven is family and health. Hell? Luckily, I haven't found that yet.
Page Neal, Prospect Heights, jewelry designer	Heaven is being positive and focused with lots of snacks and beaches in the mix. Hell is having an office job where I am surrounded by non-funny people who think that talking in strange accents is amusing.
Simcha Weinstein, Brooklyn Heights, rabbi, Pratt Institute	Heaven is the culmination of all the good deeds a person has done. You're building your own paradise. It's the difference between 'being' and 'becoming.' This world is the 'becoming.' Hell is all the good deeds you could have done, but didn't do when you had the chance.

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Rocks of ages

We're not called the Borough of Churches for nothing. The oldest church in Brooklyn — the Flatbush Dutch Reformed Church — was ordered built by Peter Stuyvesant himself in 1662 (though it wasn't completed until 1793). Here's a look at other Brooklyn congregations that stuck up (unlike Dutch Reformed, most are not housed in their original buildings).

— Christie Rick

Congregation (neighborhood)	Age
Dawood Mosque (Boerum Hill)	83 years
Congregation Mount Sinai (Brooklyn Heights)	125 years
Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary & St. Stephen (Carroll Gardens)	125 years
Sixth Avenue Baptist Church (Park Slope)	140 years
Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church (Fort Greene)	150 years
Kane Street Synagogue (Cobble Hill)	150 years
St. Patrick's (Bay Ridge)	157 years
Holy Cross Church (Flatbush)	159 years
Plymouth Church (Brooklyn Heights)	160 years
St. John's Episcopal Church (Bay Ridge)	173 years
New Utrecht Reformed Church (Bensonhurst)	179 years

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Bruce Oelschlager, Minister of Music

Sunday, April 1 • 11:00 a.m.

Palm Sunday Worship Service

Thursday, April 5 • 7:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Communion and Tenebrae Service

Friday, April 6

Good Friday

12:00 – 3:00 P.M. Sanctuary open

Sunday, April 8 • 11:00 a.m.

Easter Worship Service

Rev. Dr. David C. Fisher, preaching

The Plymouth Choir performs selections from the Brahms *Requiem* and *An Easter Hallelujah* by Melchior Vulpius. A traditional Easter egg hunt follows in the Cranberry Street Garden.



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'Nothing' but beliefs

By Nica Lalli
The Brooklyn Paper

When you identify your religious affiliation as "Nothing," it can be challenging to figure out what you do believe in.

I am here to say what you don't believe in, as in "I don't believe in God." I don't believe that there is a divine entity in the sky that tangles with us down here on Earth." I don't believe in God because I am here because there is a force or a personality willing them to be.

But being "nothing" doesn't mean believing in nothing. So what do I believe in?

I believe that we, as humans, control our own minds and actions. When a church-going person says, "Thank God," I

say, "Thank me." For thanking a god for providing food, but rather for thanking those who worked to literally put the food on the table. That is usually me. I get the credit for doing good work.

I have been told that this is arrogant, that God is the one who provides, and we should be grateful. I believe that this thinking that God does about you is arrogant — I mean he doesn't have better things to do with his time than listen to us.

The human condition — the quest for happiness, the desire to better oneself, and the ability to learn, change and heal — is what religion could best belief in. When I live on, I am changed; some would say that God is testing or challenging us. But I say that the challenge comes from within.

I have had this happen, like when my friend was widowed and he didn't think he could make it through life alone. But he did, and he is here now. I am thrilled to say, he is happy. He didn't forget his pain, though. But he learned to live with it.

I also believe in strong community, which is also about people. And so I go to my neighborhood, stay involved and watch out for my neighbors. I work to make Park Slope a better place, and if what religion can do is belief in people. When I live on, I will

have someone to turn to, but I will

I saw the first sign of spring

yesterday, green shoots pushing up through the dirt in my tree pit outside my house. I have re-mindful that the symbols of spring — of rebirth and regeneration — are just as important to me as they are to those with religion.

'Nothing' is delivered

I was driving in Manhattan one day, I signaled to make a turn onto Broadway. There were many people all around the car, including pedestrians, other drivers, and a bus at the intersection full of riders. There were huge advertisements on the side of the building, blow-up pictures of celebrities — people staring down at me. I had to wait to make the turn, since the crosswalk was still crossed.

I looked all around me and felt the strong presence of the people. My car windows were rolled up. I didn't feel safe, I didn't feel anyone; it was a different kind of sense of work.

The strong presence was that each person — right there on the street at that very moment in time — was thinking of something, was remembering, feeling, coming up with ideas. It was as if I could feel the energy that made all those people individuals.

Each person in the world has his own story, thoughts, and internal life. It seemed overwhelming, and I had to remind myself to breathe. I took in a deep breath, and the crosswalk cleared. I put my foot to the gas pedal and took to turn down Broadway. The moment passed, I turned on the radio, and drove home.

From: *Nothing: Something to Believe In,*
by Nica Lalli (*Prometheus Books, 2007*)

The greenery reminded me of my core belief: there is always hope and spring will always come.

Nica Lalli is a columnist for the Park Slope Edition of *The Brooklyn Paper*.

FAITHIEST...

Continued from page 1

Belief Massacre a walk-up apartment in Brooklyn's Prospect Heights.

"You go down Coney Island Avenue and you see Arabic signs and Orthodox Jews right in the same neighborhood. And for the most part, they've gotten along," said Ron Schweizer, Brooklyn's official historian and president of Beth Emeth v' Ohel Progressive Shaar Zedek, a Reform synagogue in Kensington.

Israeli, French, Russian and Peruvian Jews meet at the Orthodox Congregation Agudath Sholom on 18th Avenue, said Schweizer. "It's a mix. They have a diverse population," she said. "Jews, you know, are all over the world."

Kennedy is also home to Polish, Italian, African, Russian, Mexican, Muslim, Albanian and Caribbean people. And then all need a house (apartment) of worship.

When asked to bring belongings, they bring their culture and faith, said Sal Tarantino, a retired social worker who lives on Church Avenue in Prospect Park.

"Faith in general was a beacon for immigrants," Tarantino said. "When I got a rabbit and he gets a little following, and boom, you've got another couch."

Stores sign in Hebrew, Arabic, Russian and English seem to hide the nondescript mosques dotting Ditmas Park and Kensington. It's hard to walk by even the largest island of immigrants, such as the Al-Mahdi Foundation on Coney Island Avenue, without noticing.

Silently not for everyone. Some people, like the immigrants from the Middle East, bring their culture and faith, said the neighborhood's strong spiritual center.

"I hear they were shopping mall," she said of the enormous Calvary Cathedral of Praise at 45 East Eighth St.

Inside the Calvary, 300 or so people are gathered and waiting for Jesus. The church's West Indian population makes Caribbean-Americans feel at home — but John James, the lone black Christian in the congregation here, Sunday, said he felt just as at "home."

Jones moved to Kensington from Bay Ridge four months ago and said he adores the neighborhood's strong spiritual center.

"It's a mix of people from all over the world," Jones said. "It's a mix of people from all over the world."

Shabbat at the tiny hole-in-the-wall Berea Church of God at 1600 Newark Ave. The con-

gregation was entirely Haitian and the Sunday service is held in Haitian Creole.

"In that time of the Great Depression, when people had nothing, they found the means to build this beautiful, magnificent structure," said Father Robert G. Serrano, leader of a mostly western European and Filipino flock.

When we asked directions to the New York Cambodian American Society's Buddhist temple, a woman from a nearby woman near Park Circle said she didn't know, but added, "There's a great church right there," and pointed to the colossal Buddhist Buddhist Church on Coney Island Avenue.

The woman hurried off saying, "I love you, I love you. There is only one salvation, and that's the living God and his holy spirit."

Not everyone is happy about this religious fervor.

"It's too much," said Suzanne Koenig, who moved to Kensington seven years ago. "The area's mega-churches don't pay enough taxes and are generally huge cement cyresses, said the agnostic Knabe.

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7:30p.m. El Via Crucis en Espanol

HOLY SATURDAY, April 7th

8:00p.m. Solemn Easter Vigil Mass

EASTER SUNDAY, April 8th

9:00a.m. English Mass and Children's Liturgy

11:00a.m. Misa en Espanol • 12:15p.m. English Mass

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Decanters and Decanting

By Darrin Siegfried

When I teach aspiring Wine Campers about decanting wine, I tell them that there are three "Official" reasons for decanting, and one "Insider's" reason: Big bottles, such as double magnums, are awkward to pour from. It is easier, and you will spill less, if you pour from the bottle into a decanter; I have always loved big bottles. They're so much fun to open at a party, and they make an impressive gift. Opening a larger bottle seems to make it more of a special occasion, but pouring from such a heavy bottle can often lead to accidents. Show off the bottle, open it, and fill up your decanter.

2 Young wines, especially reds, will improve from the aeration the wine receives from decanting. The flavors and aromas will open up, the wine will taste softer and will drink better. Simply opening a bottle and letting it stand there, with a surface area smaller than a penny exposed to the air does nothing to help the wine "breathe". Try it for yourself: the next time you open a bottle, set it aside and your glorified taste it. Then decant the rest, let it stand for a few minutes and pour another taste. You'll be surprised at the difference a bit of breathing can make!

3 Older red wines usually accumulate sediment with aging. In decanting, you pour the wine into another vessel, leaving the sediment behind. The combination of tannins and pigments in some reds form long molecules called polymers that, in time, will sink to the bottom of the bottle. Vintage Porto "throws" lots of sediment, Bordeaux reds throw a good amount, but lighter reds such as Burgundy rarely do. You can tell if there is sediment in the bottle by

holding it up to a bright light. To decant your wine, let the bottle stand upright, undisturbed, for at least a day. Without shaking the bottle (which would stir up the sediment) remove the cork. Slowly pour the wine into a decanter while, using a short candle as a light source, look down through the neck of the bottle. When the sediment moves in the bottle, you'll be able to see it clearly. Pour carefully, letting the sediment catch in the shoulder of the bottle, and you'll have only a spoonful of sediment and have clear wine to enjoy.

Vintage Portos come in bottles so dark that it is almost impossible to see through the glass. To decant one of these treasures, you can place a funnel into the mouth of the decanter and line it with a few layers of rinsed cheese-cloth, squeezed dry. Slowly pour the Portos into the funnel and let the cheesecloth filter out the sediment.

The "Insider's" reason for decanting: just for the sheer pleasure of it. A good friend of mine won't allow a bottle on her table, insisting on using one of her English Claret jugs to serve wine. A jug does not have to be fancy, expensive or ornate; a pitcher or a jug will do. I have a few crystal decanters, and the ones I always seem to use are well-designed yet quite plain, but I like a more modern look than many do. I just prefer serving myself and my friends from a decanter. The wine really does taste better, and it seems so elegant to pour even a simple, everyday wine from a beautiful decanter. Like a glass of wine, it's part of the good life.

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B'steeya my heart

Mazze means "many tastes" in Arabic and tasty food to be shared with a group are the focus of the menu at this Columbia Waterfront District cafe.

"The food's not just Middle Eastern here," said Gamal "Jimmy" Bakhoum (pictured), owner of the four-month-old restaurant. "What we serve is really Mediterranean."

Bakhoum, who owns two other restaurants in Manhattan's East Village, offers an array of small plates and larger shareable dishes at his 65-seat eatery.

"It's very beautiful here. Very rustic, antique style with a brick wall and the others painted ochre and soft green. The bar is beautiful too," said with a small amount of pride. "It's 23 feet long, all mahogany wood." (There's also a full-service bar.)

Bakhoum offers the usual array of spreads like hummus and baba ghanoush, as well as falafel and fava beans, stuffed zucchini and two customer favorites: garlic shrimp and dates wrapped with bacon. Entrée-sized dishes, like the "Alexandria style" grilled whole fish (usually branzino), come with a side of rice or a bowl of egg noodles.

The restaurant has no indoor seating, a fact that doesn't trouble Bakhoum, citing the joint's 18-foot doors. When they're open and the sun shines in, "it's just like being outdoors," he said.

Mazzé (208 Columbia St. between Sackett and Union streets in the Columbia Waterfront District) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. Entrees: \$12-\$16. The restaurant serves lunch and dinner daily. Brunch is available on weekends from noon-5pm. Subway: F, G to Carroll Street. For information, call (718) 852-1652.

—Tina Barry



The Brooklyn Paper / JOHN KARAS

Lamb Lam

Roasted lamb has long been a staple on the Easter dinner table. Stick-with-tradition, however, doesn't always mean the same roasted shank with a gooey pile of mint jelly.

GO Brooklyn asked Charlie Statedman, chef and owner of Wombat in Williamsburg, to come up with a twist on an old favorite. Statedman went above and beyond, though, inventing a mint and cucumber salad just for us. So, while your Easter may usually be pastel, this recipe will add a real dash of color to your holiday table.

Wombat's Lamb Burger and Mint Cucumber Salad

Yield: Four burgers
12 oz. of lamb shoulder, ground
24 oz. of ground beef
Salt, pepper, thyme, rosemary and oregano
Charlie's Mint Cucumber Salad

1/2 cucumber
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup distilled white vinegar
2 tablespoons of sugar
1 pinch salt
1 bunch of mint, chopped (stems off)

For the burgers, mix the meats and seasonings and toss on the grill. Frying will add too much grease to the already fatty lamb.

For the salad, skin and seed your cucumber. Slice into 1/4-inch pieces. Mix the water, vinegar, sugar and salt. Toss in the mint and cucumber. Serve immediately — either on top of or next to the burger.



MATZO...

Continued from page 1

The relationship between food and family runs deep. "For so many people, food is a connection to Judaism," said Chaya Kirschenbaum who last week led a Passover cooking class, part of a quarterly series of Women's Hebrew programming at 214 Underhill Ave. in Prospect Heights.

Taught by Levana Kirschenbaum — who is, of course, firmly in the acculturated Kosher American camp — Levana's, the class attracted a gaggle of women looking to take the edge off their harried hostess routine.

Chef Kirschenbaum's advice for preparing a meal that will please both the host and the guests follows: "To make dishes that never had chumetz (breadstuffs that are forbidden during Passover) to begin with," she said.

Her demonstration ranged

from a simple artichoke soup and a salmon dish caked with a thick ambrosia of fresh herbs, to subtle elevations of holiday classics like her Seder Matzo Brisket.

From mameyitas to meringues, Passover desserts have plagued holiday hosts for generations. Chef Kirschenbaum's flourless chocolate torte, which is made with ground nuts, and high-end chocolate (she uses 72% kasher), was dense and decadent, the perfect answer to the perennial Passover predicament.

"I gravitate towards Jewish desserts," she said. "Identity is that important."

Glanville and her husband own L'Epicerie, a fine foods store at 270 Vanderbilt Ave. in Prospect Heights that sells prepared food including, yes, homemade brisket.

As the night wore on and Chef Kirschenbaum's creations were pulled from the oven, the conversation turned to the central issue of the Seder: the matzo balls.

It is a question of faith: Should the seltzer sink to the bottom of the soup or should they be "clouds," buoyant masses that deconstruct in the broth? All agreed that seltzer made the balls fluffier, but

few had made the connection that the more you handle your matzo balls, the heavier they will be.

It depends on one's tradition — though even tradition changes. In recent years, my



Pesachid pleasures: Levana Kirschenbaum's flourless chocolate torte, above, along with her herb-spiked salmon, at left, are both tasty ways to keep Kosher for Passover.

decadent Riojas and plummy Bordeaux: square cakes of matzo were replaced with artisanal, handmade varieties, bubbling as if cooked in a tandoor.

And as my brothers and I grew and made the bittersweet matzo — from the "kids' house" to dining room — our tastes began to transcend the matzo pizzas of yore and came to appreciate the flavors of the holiday and the unrivaled brilliance of our mother, whose finesse made those early spring nights truly different from all others.

For information on Women's Inner Circle programming, contact Rabbi Ari and Chaya Kirschenbaum at jccbrooklyn@gmail.com.

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PERIODIC FEATURES

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE



Was 'Dine in Brooklyn' a deal?

With more than 150 restaurants participating, "Dine in Brooklyn" was quite a feat. Diners from near and far flocked to their bibs and hunkered down for three-course meals at restaurants across the borough. GO Brooklyn was no exception. Below, our thoughts on the restaurants where we dropped our very own \$21.12.

WHO	WHERE	WHAT	WAS IT WORTH IT?	WHERE THEY GET YOU
Gersh Kuntzman	12th Street Bar and Grill (1123 Eighth Ave., at 12th Street in Park Slope, (718) 695-9526)	An appetizer choice, main course choice and a dessert choice.	Yes, with caveats. Portions, especially the sauteed Thai calamari, were a bit small, but all were delicious.	They don't. Normal drink prices apply.
	Scottadito (788A Union St. at Sixth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 636-4800)	An antipasto choice, a pasta choice and a meat course (try the braised short ribs). No dessert.	Absolutely. By dispensing with dessert, Scottadito provides a full Italian meal.	They don't. There was even a half-bottle wine special.
Christie Rizk	Cooote (337 Fifth Ave. at Fourth Street in Park Slope, (718) 832-6848)	A salad with foie gras, steak au poivre and a flourless chocolate cake.	Definitely. Where — or when else are you going to get foie gras and steak for \$21?	With the drinks (a soda, a glass of wine and a bottle of beer), the restaurant made the price of another dinner.
Ariella Cohen	Apartment 138 (138 Smith St. at Bergen Street in Cobble Hill, (718) 858-0556)	Butternut squash risotto, a slab of grilled chicken served with buttery smashed potatoes and a cute mini apple and cranberry cobbler with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.	After enjoying the food — and the leftovers! — we are confident in saying that Apartment 138 was not trying to skimp.	With the \$4 Pabst. But it looked great against the white tablecloth, so it was worth it.
Dana Rubinstein	Olea Mediterranean Taverna (171 Lafayette Ave. at Adelphi Street, Fort Greene, (718) 643-7003)	Lentil salad with falafel croutons, orecchiette pasta and a dessert choice of fig and mascarpone tart or chocolate torte.	Sure, but just barely.	They didn't. The beer was fairly priced.
Rob M. Errera	La Maison Du Couscous (484 77th St. at Fifth Avenue in Bay Ridge, (718) 921-2400)	A starter, an entree and a couscous dessert of choice.	Definitely. Though modestly sized, the tagines were delectable, especially the lamb with artichoke hearts and green peas.	The host urged against the "Dine in Brooklyn" deal, pointing out the original prices would come out cheaper per person.
Adam Rathe	The River Cafe (1 Water St. at Old Fulton Street in DUMBO, (718) 522-5200)	Truffled chicken salad, sea scallops and the dessert trio.	More exciting than a week's worth of deli sandwiches — and more expensive, too.	The \$5 iced tea is a bit much, but it's an integral part of the experience.
	Rice (81 Washington St. at Front Street in DUMBO, (718) 222-9800)	A shared dim sum appetizer, curried chicken and gelato.	Absolutely. At two-for-\$21.12, this was a great deal.	On the return business — because you'll definitely come back.

MYRTLE...

Continued from page 7

...the place doesn't help clear things up either. A hint of Southern comfort mixed with European finesse make this the rare place where an order of fried chicken doesn't mean a week on the treadmill.

Brunch is similarly hearty and filling, with a variety of dishes ranging from corned beef hash to a prosciutto and sheep's milk omelet. The bar is also well stocked with whiskey, and the happy hour starts early — running from 4:30-6 p.m. — making it a perfect stop before the night really starts to get going.

Rope

Nightlife is still relatively new to the area and the walk between venues isn't always enjoyable. Alyssa Apkinson, a regular at indie rock haunt Rope, doesn't feel completely safe.

"It's a little sketchy," she

told GO Brooklyn. But that doesn't stop her from traveling from her home in Borough Park to visit. What she likes about Rope, she said, is that the relaxing atmosphere and the friendly staff has to do with our way to visit.

"The vibe is low key. Everyone is friendly."

During the week the bar can feel more like a friend's living room, with people stopping by to have a beer or drop their bags haphazardly to the side and lounging on the couches littered around the room.

There is a decent selection of liquor on the bar, including a restaurant, take-out window and a bar with nightly acts ranging from comedy to jazz. The food here comes in gigantic portions and is relatively affordable, which makes the takeout window almost as busy as the bar.

It's also open late, good news for those needing a snack like the hickory smoked spare ribs, North Carolina Chopped BBQ or Cajun catfish in the middle of the night.

Vesper Lounge

The most surprising spot around may be the recently opened, decidedly fancy, Vesper Lounge. It's clean, dimly lit and the cocktails — visitors perch on stylish bar stools bathed in candlelight to sip them. While some locals complain that the lounge is too expensive — an imported beer costs \$6 — Vesper does offer discounts on "Tuesday," where a roll of 7, 11 or doubles will drop the price to \$4.

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MYRTLE...

Continued from page 7

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"The vibe is low key. Everyone is friendly."

During the week the bar can feel more like a friend's living room, with people stopping by to say hello, leaving their bags haphazardly on the side and lounging on the couches littered around the room.

There is a decent selection of liquor, mostly by the bottle, and bar staff are a some great ones on tap. During the weekend, the space can get "very crowded," according to Apkinson, with students in search of a bar with a juke box, but it's still approachable and fun. "It's just a great place to meet people."

Five Spot Soul Food

Head a few doors down to Five Spot Soul Food and you'll find a hole-in-the-wall, including a basement, take-out window and a bar with nightly acts ranging from comedy to jazz. The food here comes in gigantic portions and is relatively affordable, which makes the takeout window almost as busy as the dining room.

It's also open late, good news for those needing a snack like the hickory smoked spare ribs, North Carolina Chopped BBQ or Cajun catfish in the middle of the night.

Vesper Lounge

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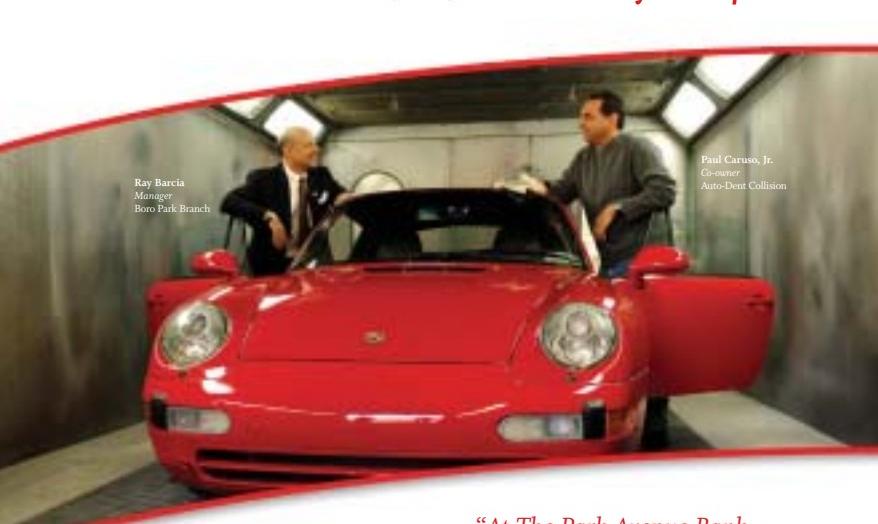
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Dirty gospel

Rev. Vince brings gospel stylings to 'Church of the Holy, Unruly Spirit of God in Christ'

By Chris Varmus
for The Brooklyn Paper

It's 1:30 am on a Monday — well, Tuesday now — and church is still packed. The cocktails are flowing at Black Betty, the Williamsburg nightspot where Rev. Vince Anderson has conducted services of his "Church of the Holy, Unruly Spirit of God in Christ" every week for the past three years.

This is church in the broadest definition of the word: it's whatever bar he happens to be in that night. And the Reverend, who is officially ordained, appears with his "Love Choir" — but don't expect any robes on the one occasional backup singer; the "Love Choir" is a backing band comprised of bass, drums, trombone, and banjo.

And, naturally, the Reverend, the lead singer, accompanies himself on the keys.

The crowd is a mix of young and old, from a wide array of backgrounds. One powdered young man in a Park Slope T-shirt asks how awesome the Reverend is. A young woman drags her older date out into the middle of the floor to cut a rug, even as she makes a point of letting everyone know, "I'm Jewish."

Many come simply for the music, while others do so having managed to appreciate it's rip-roaring ("dirty gospel," a term coined after the fact, but which has become a sort of theology).

In Anderson's original tune, "Get Outta My Way," Jesus likes to "blow off some steam and disrupt a wed-ding." In another, Anderson responds



NIGHTLIFE

Rev. Vince Anderson's "Church of the Holy, Unruly Spirit of God in Christ" at Black Betty (566 Metropolitan Ave. at Havemeyer Street), Monday through Friday, 10:30 pm. Call (718) 599-0243 for information.

to Jerry Falwell's post-9/11 statement that "New York City got what it deserved," by growling, Tom Waits-like, "Don't think Jesus done it that way."

Holy roller: Vince Anderson, backed by the "Love Choir," spreads the good word in Williamsburg.

As you might imagine, he has received some angry emails, including from one irate Christian who said his act was "turning Jesus into a porn star."

"Says more about where his mind is," laughed Anderson. "After all, the best gospel songs have earthly contents."

Though the music he plays is

gospel, he doesn't do much preaching at his service. He sometimes guest-ministers at Revolution NYC, another Brooklyn nightspot, and Jay Bakker, the (real) son of Jim and Tammy Faye. Though he was kicked initially about "competition" moving in on his turf, Rev. Vince feels there's plenty of room in Brooklyn for multi-tavern-based congregations. (Revolution NYC opens on Sundays at nearby Brooklyn Stew.)

Born in 1970 in Southern California, Vince Anderson grew up in a conventional Lutheran household, though his father, a copier salesman, was a "classic drunk."

Anderson played piano at the church from an early age and landed his first music director job at age 12 at a startup church run out of a school on Sunday.

"The little Martin Luther in me wanted to change church," he said wryly.

Anderson moved to New York in 1994 to attend Union Theological Seminary, whose interdenominational approach appealed to him as potentially radical. But Anderson found it overly academic, and saw his classes as boring. After a year, he quit and transferred. While being called on to play music more, he saw musicians relegated to a supporting role in the church.

On Epiphany Sunday that year, he decided to leave the seminary and focus on spreading the Gospel through music. After a brief period of living in his student housing, he noticed a posting in the student union: "Music Director Needed. Housing Provided."

"God has a sense of humor," he said with a chuckle.

He got the job and the housing, the pastor of a church in Queens. Where he stayed for three years. During that period, he began performing in bars on the Lower East Side. His theology had been "Holy Spirit-based," rooted in spontaneity, unpredictability, and good old-fashioned rock and roll.

"God loves children and drunkards," as he fond of saying.

He finds the idea of God taking human form — in all its inherent imperfections — life-affirming.

"Real things," as the good Reverend told GO Brooklyn, "come down to earth, roll around in the mud, and get

covered this book," Travis S.D. told GO Brooklyn. "Everyone always knows 'Moby Dick,' but 'The Confidence-Man' is extremely interesting and a bit more experimental, proving that books can be cool too."

Proceeds from this event benefit the non-profit arts organization, Coney Island USA, which runs the Coney Island Museum, the Mermaid Parade, the Coney Island Film Festival and other sideshow celebrations. So, be sure to break your practical jokes, in addition to your real cash, and your chip in to support monkey business at the ever-changing sideshow stage of Coney Island.

"The Confidence-Man," will take place at 5 pm on April 1 at Sideshow by the Seashore (120 Surf Ave. at West 12th Street). Admission is \$10. For information, visit www.coneyislandusa.com.

— Sarah McCormick



Fools rule

Whether you're a fan of ding-dong ditch or swapping the salt with sugar, anyone with a penchant for mischief loves April Fools Day. And, for the reading rascals among us, it's certainly no coincidence that H. L. Mencken's first novel, "The Confidence-Man," the tale of a slippery Con man and his adventures along the Mississippi, was published on April 1, 1857.

Brooklyn's very own 19th-century home for confidence men is Coney Island, where the Man, the tale of a slippery Con man and his adventures along the Mississippi, was published on April 1, 1857.

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Vaudeville champion Travis S.D. (pictured) will be staging a production of "The Confidence-Man" April 1 at Sideshow by the Seashore — quite Dreamland, but certainly more inspired than what Thor Equites wants to build.

"In the last decade, critics have really redis-

CHECKIN' IN WITH...

Larry Scott

It's a wonder that Larry Scott never got his ass kicked — the guy's been clowning people since the age of 12. As the owner of the gags, magic and entertainment shop Havin' A Party, with locations in Bay Ridge and Canarsie, Scott is a bona fide authority on practical jokes and tomfoolery. So this week, on the eve of April Fools Day, Scott checked in with GO Brooklyn's Joe Pompeo to see what kind of pranksters residents might fall victim to this year.

Q: What gags are in style right now?

A: Shock items are number one. For instance, you have a balloon point that when you press down to write, you get a shock. There's a shock marker marker, chewing gum, a megaphone, a alarm clock, a newer stuff like a shock mp3 player.

Q: What are your most popular items of all time?

A: The classic stuff is the hand buzzer, chewing gum that snaps down when you bite it, ways you go to take a piece, eyeglasses that have a big nose, mustache and eyebrows; the ugly teeth is a classic. Also, baseballs and rocks that make it look like your car window has been smashed. Lottery lottery tickets came out about eight years ago. They scratch off and you think you've won \$10,000, and some

people actually go into a store to claim it without reading the back of the card.

Q: That's cruel.

A: Yeah, that is pretty rough. Once DJ'd a bar mitzvah, where I threw some of the fake lotto tickets down the aisle. The girls were like, "What?" (They didn't know, of course). During the cocktail hour, this one woman started jumping up and down screaming, "I won!" Then we watched her go from smiling to looking really pissed off. She came over to us and said, "That was not funny!" The mother and I were hysterically laughing.

Q: What are some pranks you've played on people?

A: When we were younger we'd do crazy stuff like put Saran wrap over a toilet seat. That's pretty rough, especially when you really have to go. We



also used to go into clubs, at the time they were disco clubs, and we'd take a guy by the shoulders and spin him around while he was dancing.

Q: Sounds like you could have gotten into some serious trouble.

A: Well you had to have a lot of friends with you. You couldn't do it by yourself. Fortunately, I always hung out with some pretty big guys.

Q: You're a magician. What's the most daring trick you've pulled off?

A: I got married!

Brooklyn messes with Texas at South by Southwest

The second week of every March, the creative masses travel to Austin, TX, a blue Mecca in the big red state, to enjoy barbecue, beer, music and film. The South by Southwest festival, now in its 21st year, features over 1,500 bands and 240 films during its brief nine-day life. GO Brooklyn's Laura McDonald caught up with some Brokyners who showcased their work to find out why everyone wants in on the action down south.

— Laura McDonald



Nate Meyer, 31, Park Slope

Director, "Pretty in the Face"



Michael Pace, 28, Greenpoint

Guitarist for Oxford Collapse



Ashley Sabin, 24, Clinton Hill

Director, "Kamp Katrina"



Michael Tully, 32, Park Slope

Director, "Silver Jew"

When you are on the road, what do you miss most about Brooklyn? Brooklyn is unquestionably my favorite place on the planet. Not only is it stimulating in and of itself, it provides access to all the film and other arts that interest me in other boroughs and the quality of life fits me perfectly.

— Nate Meyer

What part of Austin would you like to see in Brooklyn? It would be interesting to see the Alamo Theater in NYC. I love their attitude: this close-knit small town "lets put on a show and totally have fun with it" mentality. Maybe it's better off in Austin — why taint its legacy?

When you are on the road, what do you miss most about Brooklyn? We travel quite a bit not only shooting our films but also doing screenings. As much as I enjoy traveling to the many parts of the world that our films take us to, I am always excited to return to Brooklyn.

How are Austin and Brooklyn similar or different? Austin and Brooklyn are very similar to me. There's a sense of slower living in each place, yet there's still an energy that makes both places feel vibrant and alive. It's a very special, magical feeling.



When you are on the road, what do you miss most about Brooklyn? Brooklyn is unquestionably my favorite place on the planet. Not only is it stimulating in and of itself, it provides access to all the film and other arts that interest me in other boroughs and the quality of life fits me perfectly.

— Michael Pace

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FRI, APRIL 6

Good Friday

Bethlehem Church (75 Hicks St., between Orange and Cranberry streets), 1pm. Lenten service, 8pm. Communion and reflection and noon-3 pm. Call (718) 624-4743 or visit www.bethlehem.org for information.

Average Catholic Church (116 Sixth Ave., between Sterling and Park Streets), 1pm. Lenten service, 8pm. Call (718) 432-1111 or visit www.averagecatholic.org for information.

Bethel Lutheran Church (124 Henry St., between Orange and Cranberry streets), 1pm. Lenten service, 8pm. Call (718) 624-3729 or visit www.bethelnewyork.org for information.

First Reformed Church (279 Carroll Street, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, Park Slope), 1pm. Lenten service, 8pm. Call (718) 638-5132 or visit www.firstreformedbrooklyn.org for information.

Plymouth Church (75 Hicks St., between Orange and Cranberry streets), 1pm. Lenten service, 8pm. Call (718) 624-4743 or visit www.plymouthchurch.org for information.

St. Francis Xavier (225 Sixth Ave., between Carroll and Nostrand Avenues), 1pm. Lenten service, 8pm. Call (718) 638-1880 or visit www.stfrancisxavier.org for information.

St. John-St. Matthew Emanuel Lutheran Church (17 Eastern Parkway, between Flatbush and Nostrand Avenues), 1pm. Lenten service, 8pm. Call (718) 638-5200 or visit www.jstmatthew.org for information.

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9 DAYS...

Continued from page 2

performances and interactive art, \$20 per person. 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Brooklyn Center, 399 Atlantic Ave., lower level. (718) 852-2494.

ARTS **FOR** **TODAY:** "All Your Senses," 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. See Sat., March 31.

TEEDY BEAR WORKSHOP: Old baby hosts one-year anniversary party with games, a chance to meet and discounts on handmade stuffed animals. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. US Court at Sackett. (718) 422-1978.

OTHER

VEGAN BRUNCH: Vox Pop hosts a food and book event featuring Isa Meeker, author of "Vegan Soul Kitchen: Eat Well, Live Well, Love the World." \$7 includes cruelty-free lemon corn waffles or breakfast sandwich, juice, coffee, tea, and more. Info: 1022 Cortelyou Rd. (718) 940-2084.

ORGAN FESTIVAL: Organ grinders Cymatics and Crysto perform at Cymatics' annual benefit concert. Collectors Association, Coney Island. 4:45 p.m. Free.

SUNDAY TALK: Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture presents a platform for older folks to express their vision of a Communitarian Vision and Ethical Values." Lise Burns leads. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Brooklyn Center, 399 Atlantic Ave. (718) 789-2972. Free.

SIGHT & SOUND: Screening of four classic Buster Keaton silent short film comedies: "The Scarecrow" (1920), "One Week" (1920), "The Boat" (1921), and "The General" (1926). Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Grand Army Plaza, at Flatbush Avenue and Eastern Parkway. (718) 230-2100. Free.

MON, APRIL 2

Passover begins tonight **KNOW YOUR MIND:** Learn how to change your mind. \$10. 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Flatbush Center for Education, 48 Monroe St. (718) 496-5514.

TUES, APRIL 3 **COLUMBIAN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION:** hosts its April dinner meet-



Peanuts and Crackerjack: Prospect Park hosts the annual Little League Parade, beginning at 10 a.m. on March 31. The parade steps off at Seventh Avenue and Carroll Street, going up Ninth Street and turning into the Park, ending at the bandshell. The opening day ceremony follows, beginning at approximately 10:45 a.m.

ing. Guest speaker is Mark A. Longo, Esq. He addresses the topic: "Ethical Considerations and Lawyer Advertising and Solicitations." 6 p.m. Rex

SMALL BUSINESS TALK: presented by

Karen Geller, 1000 40th St., at 11th Avenue. Call for information. (718) 787-0158.

WEDNESDAY: **Cardio**, 7 p.m., FREE.

The Salty Dog, 7509 Third Ave., Flatbush Street in Bay Ridge. (718) 238-9250. www.saltydogbar.com.

Wednesday: Karaoke, 9 p.m., FREE.

The Wicked Monk, 1415 Fifth Ave., 2nd Street in Bay Ridge. (718) 231-0264.

Kitty Kiernan's, 270 1/2 5th Street in Bay Ridge. (718) 921-0271. www.kittyciernans.com.

March 31: Mike & John, 10 p.m. FREE.

Reign, 45 Washington Ave., Flushing Avenue in Clinton Hill. (718) 643-7347. www.reignnyc.com.

Saturdays: "Your Space Saturday" with DJ Hud, 11 p.m. FREE, before 12:30 a.m. \$20 after 12:30 a.m.

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Food 4 Thought, 44 Marcus Garvey Blvd., MacDonough Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant. (718) 442-4160.

Philosophically **Phat** **Thursdays:** Open discussion, 8 p.m., donation suggested; Wednesdays: "Gang Night" (Cash Flow), 7 p.m., FREE.

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These evil space villains took her for a ride

By Gersh Kuntzman

The Brooklyn Paper
A woman was forced at gunpoint by two thugs to drive to her bank and withdraw \$1,500 on March 20.

It all started at around 2:10 pm when the woman was walking to pull out of a spot on Sixth Street, between Seventh and Eighth avenues. Just as she was preparing to leave three muggers drove up in a green car and asked, "Are you smiling?"

Before she could answer, two of the men hopped into the woman's car and drove off a black pinstripe. "Give me the money," one of the men shouted.

The woman turned over \$300, but the gunman wanted more, forcing the woman to drive to a bank three blocks away.

The woman was threatened repeatedly to coerce her into cooperating.

"Bring her to Fifth Avenue, and I will kill her," one of the men had threatened, "what would happen if the woman didn't turn over the money."

Once at the bank, which is on Ninth Street, the woman and one of the men went inside, after which she withdrew the \$1,500.

When the woman and her mugger returned to the street, the green car was back, and the suspect who had driven off and disappeared towards Fourth Avenue.

Police are looking for a 5-foot-8, 200-pound black man, about 45, last seen wearing a black sport jacket and a baseball cap, a five-foot-7, 150-pound white male, about 25, who preferred a green

78 PCT BLOTTER

sneaker jacket.

The victim did not get a good look at the driver.

Rob me now?

A Third Avenue glass manufacturer had one of its glassware storage units during the week of March 12, and the unit was broken when the thief until the thief had dialed up more than \$650 in calls.

The owner of the business, which is on Fifth Avenue, told cops that the call-crashed perp took one of the company's office cellphones sometime between March 12 and March 19.

The phone has since turned off. When cops went door-to-door

in the building, the victim's upstairs neighbor told them that her apartment had also been robbed "in the same manner," the report shows.

Car gone

A Staten Island woman was stolen from a garage sedan on Park Place overnight on March 22.

The 53-year-old man told police that she had parked the car between Fifth and Sixth avenues at around 11:30 pm on March 21, but when she returned at 6:45 the next morning, the car was gone.

No sleeping

A man who had consumed a drink or two too many got onto a Brooklyn-bound F train at Second Avenue in Manhattan only to wake up in the Seventh Avenue station in Park Slope to a

true nightmare: someone had cut open his pants pocket and stolen his wallet.

The suddenly sober victim, who lives on Ninth Street, told cops he had lost a Motorola cell-phone, a wallet and various credit cards.

Want fishing

This ain't no fish story: A woman had a fishing pole stolen out of her car on March 24.

The 26-year-old woman had parked the car on Second Avenue near 12th Street at around 5 pm. When she returned to it the next morning, she discovered that the hook on the passenger-side door had been broken and the trunk had been cleared out.

In addition to the fishing pole, the woman had lost \$60 and various ID cards.

— one black, one Hispanic, both around 18 years old — started yelling at each other.

With everyone's attention focused on the two teens, one of the perps was able to swipe the woman's bag as he ran out of the bar, which is at the corner of Seventh Street.

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Big change at 'Hens'

By Nica Lalli

The Brooklyn Paper

The name may be changing, but the Brooklyn Blackout Cake will remain.

Two Little Red Hens bakery on Eighth Avenue between 11th and 12th Streets is now the Ladybird, and it's the new name of an amicable split between longtime partners, Mary Louise Clemens and Christine Winkler.

In a statement, Winkler said the ladybird gets the Upper East Side-store and all the wholesale business, while Clemens retains the Brooklyn location.

"I am happy that I'll get to be here more," Clemens said.

Clemens gave the valuable "Little Red Hens" name to her partner 12 years ago because she wanted to have a fresh start and a new look in Brooklyn.

The new name, she said, came from a couple she met.

A ladybird, explained Clemens, a native of Texas, is what Southerners call a ladybug. In Texas, ladybirds fly through the bluebonnets (which is the state flower). She said that her new logo will have the bluebonnet and the ladybird on it.

Watch for her new sign in the next few weeks, and get that Easter order in today! Indeed, some things never change.

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High crime: Man's stash is taken

POLICE BLOTTER

By Matthew Lysiak
and Michael Giardina
The Brooklyn Paper

68th Precinct

A 22-year-old man was robbed by three men who took \$70, two bags of marijuana, and, apparently, their victim's common sense on March 10.

Police said the victim had received a phone call from a bar at Third Avenue and 92nd Street, where he was physically threatened by the three strangers as he was about to answer nature's call at 3:45 am.

The man told police he turned over the cash, and two plastic bags are on the lookout for the perps, who didn't think too much of the victim's offer.

"We should have arrested that man for stupidity," a police source said.

No way home

The recent string of navigation system heists found another victim on March 10.

In the third reported map-swipe in the last nine days, a 26-year-old woman returned to her car at 5 pm only to discover her driver's side door lock had been pulled out of

her 2004 Cadillac Escalade and her navigation system, valued at \$1,500, was missing.

She told cops that the car had been parked on 12th Street near 75th Street.

Wheels swiped

A 38-year-old man was taken to her Fort Hamilton Avenue apartment at 6:50 pm to discover that someone had raided her bedroom closet and stolen more than \$4,000 in jewels on March 25.

The 31-year-old victim told

police she looked for her car at 4 pm, but it had gone missing, along with a navigation system, valued at \$350 and an additional \$1,850 worth of accessories.

Police are on the lookout.

Out of the closet

A 16-year-old girl was sliced in the face by a pair of brass knuckles at the corner of Ridge Boulevard and 90th Street on March 12.

It's unclear what sparked the violence, but the victim told cops that she was walking down the street at 2:30 pm and had gotten into an argument with a stranger.

Police said the victim did not want to press charges.

The victim told police that her collection included a diamond-and-gold wedding band.

Police are questioned neighbors in the building, which is near 9th Street and Ridge.

Brass knuckles

An 18-year-old girl was sliced in the face by a pair of brass knuckles at the corner of Ridge Boulevard and 90th Street on March 12.

It's unclear what sparked the

violence, but the victim told cops

that she was walking down the

street at 2:30 pm and had gotten

into an argument with a stranger.

Police said the victim did not

want to press charges.

68th Precinct

Unholy heist!

A Bay Parkway synagogue parishioner was taken to her home on March 21 as she was praying.

The woman was in the synagogue, which was packed at around 10 am, but when she finished her ritual, she noticed that her bag — which contained \$2,500 and a cellphone — was missing.

Unfortunately, no one was able to get a good look at the crook.

Old-timer swipe

An elderly woman was the victim of the old bump and run, which she had her wallet snatched as she was shopping in an 86th Street convenience store on March 23.

The 76-year-old woman was in the store, which is near 86th Street, at around 1 pm, when she felt a bump from an unknown person. When she left the store, she noticed her wallet was gone, which contained \$45.

The woman failed to get a good look at the thief.

Wallet fumble

A man's wife dropped his wallet while they were shopping in an 86th Street supermarket on March 23, and the pair watched in horror as a fleet-footed female thief plucked it and ran.

No Victory for FDNY Ambulances will not go there anymore

By Matthew Lysiak
The Brooklyn Paper

The FDNY will no longer send emergency ambulances to Victory Memorial Hospital — a decision the city dooms the hospital to financial doom after local pols crowed that they had saved the troubled medical center's emergency room.

The surprising move goes into effect April 1, and means that all 911 calls coming from Sheepshead Bay on March 25 will now be routed either to Maimonides Medical Center in Borough Park or Lutheran Medi-

cal Center in Prospect Park.

The decision caused the blood pressure of local officials who are questioning the sanity of taking Victory's three ambulances off the road while South West Brooklyn's emergency rooms are already at full capacity.

"This is insane," said Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge). "Victory still has a working emergency room, certified EMTs, and working ambulances, and the changes... I don't see why they cannot still provide ambulance service to Southwest Brooklyn."

But Marcellino, chairman of the Dyker Heights hospital's board of trustees, told The Brooklyn Paper on March 17 that local officials would soon be announcing that the medical center had found a partner to save its busy emergency room — but that an-

nouncement never came.

"We are still in the process of looking for a partner and we have a couple of people lined up," said spokesman Ronald DeFranco. "Obviously, this move takes one of our bargaining chips off the table."

DeFranco said that the call for pickup of victims of the 911 call is premature to say the least, and isn't sure the hospital will be able to survive the blow.

"At least 75 percent of our patients come through the emergency room," DeFranco said. "We know for a fact that that number will go down. We just don't know how much."

Another reason from Gentile that the decision caused the blood pressure of local officials who are questioning the sanity of taking Victory's three ambulances off the road while South West Brooklyn's emergency rooms are already at full capacity.

"It is called pitting and we have recommended Victory's closure. Victory is still a vital cog in the neighborhood's emergency medical machine. The center's emergency room is at 104 percent capacity."

The 254-bed hospital declared bankruptcy in November amid scrutiny of the hospital's compensation practices, which led to a \$1.1-million severance package for departing CEO David H. Dinkins.

New management is in place, but DeFranco believes the new team was doomed from the start.

"They have phenomenal management in place now," DeFranco said. "But it looks like they came too late."

that have kept their ambulances off the road.

"Four minutes could mean the difference between life and death."

The average city response time for a patient who calls 911 is six to seven minutes.

DeFranco said he hasn't surprised the management, and believes it is part of a larger plan to close the hospital completely.

The hospital is being closed and they are taking it apart piece by piece," DeFranco said.

DeFranco said that the city is taking up Victory. This week, he demanded that FDNY Chief John Pepe reverse "the ill-advised decision" to end Victory Memorial's contract as an ambulance destination.

DeFranco said the hospital is being closed and they are taking it apart piece by piece," DeFranco said.

Despite a state report last year recommending Victory's closure, Victory is still a vital cog in the neighborhood's emergency medical machine. The center's emergency room is at 104 percent capacity.

The 254-bed hospital declared bankruptcy in November amid scrutiny of the hospital's compensation practices, which led to a \$1.1-million severance package for departing CEO David H. Dinkins.

New management is in place, but DeFranco believes the new team was doomed from the start.

"They have phenomenal management in place now," DeFranco said. "But it looks like they came too late."

Correction

In our March 17 edition an article was accompanied by a three-year-old photo of Rep. Vito Fossella (R-Bay Ridge) handing a ceremonial check to officials of Victory. Members of the hospital's board of trustees, which later disbanded in part due to the poor management of one of the officials to whom Fossella was handing the check ("Victory finds partner," March 17), pointed out that the grant money in the 2004 picture had been allocated to support the hospital's emergency room, not the disgraced hospital official.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 13th day of March, 2007, in Case No. 05-CV-00024-A, a copy of which may be examined at the office of the Clerk of the Court, 100 Court Street, Kings County, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 300, grants the Plaintiff, the City of New York, and the Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs, Catherine Morales, the sum of \$1,000,000.00, plus interest, to the Plaintiff, the City of New York, New York 11220. My place of birth is Brooklyn, New York. My date of birth is August 12, 2005.

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KIDS SCHOOL STYLE

THE Brooklyn Paper PARENT

TEENS Camps MUSIC

Writing the book on new haggadah

DESPITE HER agnostic Jewish upbringing on Manhattan's Upper West Side, Smartmom loves Passover, the only Jewish holiday her family ever celebrated.

And believe it or not, she's a real purist when it comes to that day. That's why she got a little nervous when her mother sent her a copy of the "Haggadah for Jews and Buddhists," an attempt to express the universal theme of Passover as common to all spiritual beings. Yet Smartmom's trepidations melted away she found herself intrigued by the idea of trying something new.

Right from the beginning, this haggadah, written by Elizabeth Pearce-Glassman, speaks to the symbolic power of the holiday as it describes the enslavement of the Jews and their journey to freedom, as well as for consciousness and their striving for release from attachment towards spiritual growth.

Right from the beginning, this haggadah, written by Elizabeth Pearce-Glassman, speaks to the symbolic power of the holiday as it describes the enslavement of the Jews and their journey to freedom, as well as for consciousness and their striving for release from attachment towards spiritual growth.

Okay, everyone knows that Smartmom likes to practice Buddhism, but here she is, her bright red meditation pillow listening to the sounds of a sustained singing bowl drone from Thich Nat Hanh's Plum Village.

Smartmom's family of origin rarely went to synagogue and didn't even light Hanukkah candles — they actually celebrated Christmas, although both of her parents were Jewish.

But for Buddha's sake, Passover is Passover — and you don't mess with it.

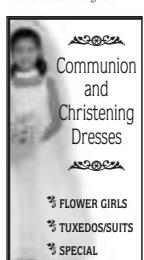
Privately, as a child, Smartmom would often bring along to be more Jewish than her family. She secretly tried to fast on Yom Kippur — though she was barely able to make it through the meal.

During Passover, she tried to skip the Pepperidge Farm white bread in favor of matzo, but it was hard to resist the French toast her mom prepared for breakfast in the morning.

Smartmom has early memories of sitting with her mother's extended family at the large modern dining room table of their Riverdale home, while listening to her grandmother read from a Maxwell House haggadah.

Though less than 6, Smartmom could improve her Passover improv as a young teenager, her normally gentle grandfather adopted a dramatic tone that conveyed reverence and gravity.

This night really was different from all other nights.



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The answers are...

Here are the answers to our religion quiz on page 3.

- 1) Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- 2) Karma Sutra, Yoga Sutra, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, Laws of Manu, Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Mahabharata and Puranas.
- 3) The Koran.
- 4) Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.
- 5) Life is suffering, suffering has an origin, suffering can be overcome (nirvana) and the path to overcoming suffering is the Noble Eightfold Path.
- 6) Ramadan is the Muslim holy month of fasting.
- 7) Do what others say as you do them so you do you.
- 8) Thou shall not lie, thou shall not take the Lord's name in vain, thou shall not worship graven images, thou shall remember the Sabbath and keep it holy, thou shall not kill, thou shall not commit adultery, thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife, thou shall honor thy father and thy mother.
- 9) Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of a religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."
- 10) No, it is not. The saying is Benjamin Franklin's and is directly contradicted by Proverbs 28:26, "He who trusts in himself is a fool."

SMART mom

By Louise Crawford



When Smartmom became an adult, she learned that there were as many styles of Passover Seders as there were families.

In college, she attended lefty Seders with a group of self-styled anarchists, Socialist Zionists, and atheists, who emphasized the struggles of all people to be free.

Later, she attended Seders associated with the Holocaust, which incorporated the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and the words of Primo Levi's *Auschwitz*.

During Passover, she tried to skip the Pepperidge Farm white bread in favor of matzo, but it was hard to resist the French toast her mom prepared for breakfast in the morning.

Smartmom has early memories of sitting with her mother's extended family at the large modern dining room table of their Riverdale home, while listening to her grandmother read from a Maxwell House haggadah.

Though less than 6, Smartmom could improve her Passover improv as a young teenager, her normally gentle grandfather adopted a dramatic tone that conveyed reverence and gravity.

This night really was different from all other nights.

Then, she married Hepcat, a WASP farm boy from Northern California brought up a Presbyterian by a mother who describes herself as an atheist.

After the On So Feisty One was born, Hepcat was open to as much Judaism as she wanted to dole out. He finds the whole religion thing to be a bit silly (Hepcat just loves to wear a yarmulke and prayer shawl at bat mitzvahs — and they are flattering on him).

Needless to say, it was up to Smartmom to "produce" the family's Seder. Whether they were having family, friends, or just themselves, she always led the Seder and selected the haggadah they were going to use.

While Smartmom's Seders are a little offbeat, they do hover closely to certain traditions. Passover — from buying the matzo to getting the leavened sweet Matzobis while chewing apples and walnuts for the chrorost; roasting the brisket; setting the table with their best plates and silver and the Seder itself — is when Smartmom is at her best.

Practicing Buddhist meditation hasn't helped her to be more Jewish or any less capable of passing on Jewish history and my brand of secular Judaism to her children.

Smartmom has found that meditation has provided her with her first experience of a divine presence — meditation offers her access to the universe, to God, to whatever is something she never felt in a synagogue.

And yet, her experience with Buddhist meditation has helped her to understand the meaning of prayer and reflection for Jews and others.

Practicing Buddhist meditation hasn't helped her to be more Jewish or any less capable of passing on Jewish history and my brand of secular Judaism to her children.

NOW, she wants to do more.

Smartmom is up to the challenge, and conduct a Seder using the "Haggadah for Jews and Buddhists".

"Hell no," Teen Spirit said (the doesn't like change). "I like Passover the way it is."

Still, Smartmom thinks it's worth a try. If she can communicate Passover's message of freedom while combining her growing interest in self-discovery and spiritual growth to Teen Spirit, OSFO, and even Hepcat, she says, "Why not?"

Whatever happens, she should, at the very least, provoke a great conversation over the gefilte fish.

Haggadah for Jews and Buddhists, by Elizabeth Pearce-Glassman (Modern Haggadah Publishing, 2006), is available for \$7 from www.modernhaggadah.com.

Louise Crawford also writes the Web column "Blogfest" on May 10.

For more information about the Haggadah for Jews and Buddhists, call 718-788-3620 or visit www.parkexplorers.com.

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By Bruce Ratner
The Brooklyn Paper

Bruce Ratner is buying this guy a car!

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Bruce Ratner is buying the son of one of his fiercest opponents a Beemer. The Atlantic Yards developer has settled with his legal opponent, Peter Williams, after Williams was arrested for removing a Ratner-owned surveillance camera from a hallway in a building owned by Williams.

"I can't tell you how much we got," said Williams. "But Lars is looking to buy the most expensive BMW."

The Atlantic Yards developer has settled with his legal opponent, Peter Williams, after Williams was arrested for removing a Ratner-owned surveillance camera from a hallway in a building owned by Williams.

company to use their hallway as an emergency exit.

But after a surveillance camera was installed in a private and public street area within the Atlantic Yards footprint, but was not yet been acquired by Ratner. It sits adjacent to a Forest City Ratner-owned building, and the Williams had allowed the development

Michael Machuch, who signed the police complaint against Williams. The lawsuit charged that Ratner had no right to install the camera on the Williams' property or have Lars Williams arrested.

Upon his release, he and his father promptly filed a lawsuit in Manhattan Supreme Court against Ratner; his vice president, James Stuckey; and But Peter Williams said the settlement

has been a financial boon for his son. "Now, Lars can study cooking in London for three months," said Williams. "No one likes to be arrested. But if you can pay off your student loans and pay your lawyer's \$28,000 legal bill, worse things could happen."

"Lars is happy," added Williams. "In the final analysis, it was not a terrible thing."

By Lars Williams
The Brooklyn Paper

Slope cop shot

By Dana Rubinstein and Christie Rizk
The Brooklyn Paper

Flatbush Avenue was in lock-down and crawling with cops on Tuesday night after a gun-toting, pot-smoking criminal allegedly shot a police officer in the back less than two blocks from its 78th Precinct headquarters.

The officer, Rory Manga, 27,

By Rory Manga
The Brooklyn Paper

was taken to New York Methodist Hospital with a broken fibula and a fractured tibia. Ray Kelly and Mayor Bloomberg rushed to his bedside, where they found Manga in stable condition and expected to recover fully. He was released from the hospital on Wednesday.

Officers Manga and Erik Merizalde were on patrol in an unmarked car at around 7:15 pm, when they spotted Kingsley Newland, 21, smoking a cigarette, smoking a joint in front of a hair salon at 443 Dean St., cops said.

When Manga left the car and approached his reffed-taking target, he was shot in the abdomen.

A police spokesman said Manga was shot in the leg.

Cops say Newland tried to fire off another shot, but his gun jammed, allowing police to collar him.

In the heat of the moment, Newland then apologized to the cops, telling them, "I didn't mean it," according to Kelly.

The police shut down Flatbush, from Fourth to Seventh avenues, for at least two hours to conduct an investigation. Cops said they were hunting a man who may have been with Newland.

Newland was charged with attempted murder, assault, criminal use of a firearm, criminal possession of a weapon, and last, but not least, criminal possession of weed. He had been arrested at least seven times before, mostly for drug possession and sales, police said.

On Wednesday, residents of the block where he was arrested by the police reported of a man smoking pot in their midst.

"It happens," said one man leaving a bodega. "It's that big a deal."

At the Methodist Hospital press conference, Bloomberg said just the opposite, praising the officers for going after Newland after spotting him with a gun.

And both he and Kelly sought to reassure Park Slope that the neighborhood is safe.

"Crimes here in the 78th Precinct are down 11 percent so far this year and there's only other shooting in this precinct this year was of another police officer, Andrew Suarez," said Kelly, referring to the Feb. 10 incident in which another cop from the 78th Precinct was shot while in patrol in Park Slope.

Ratner correction

An article in Bruce Ratner's hub lobbying expenses ("Ratner's lobby hobby," March 24) misidentified what the Health-care Association of New York State is. The organization represents more than 500 non-profit and public hospitals, nursing homes, home care agencies, and other health care organizations throughout New York State. The Brooklyn Paper regrets the error.

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